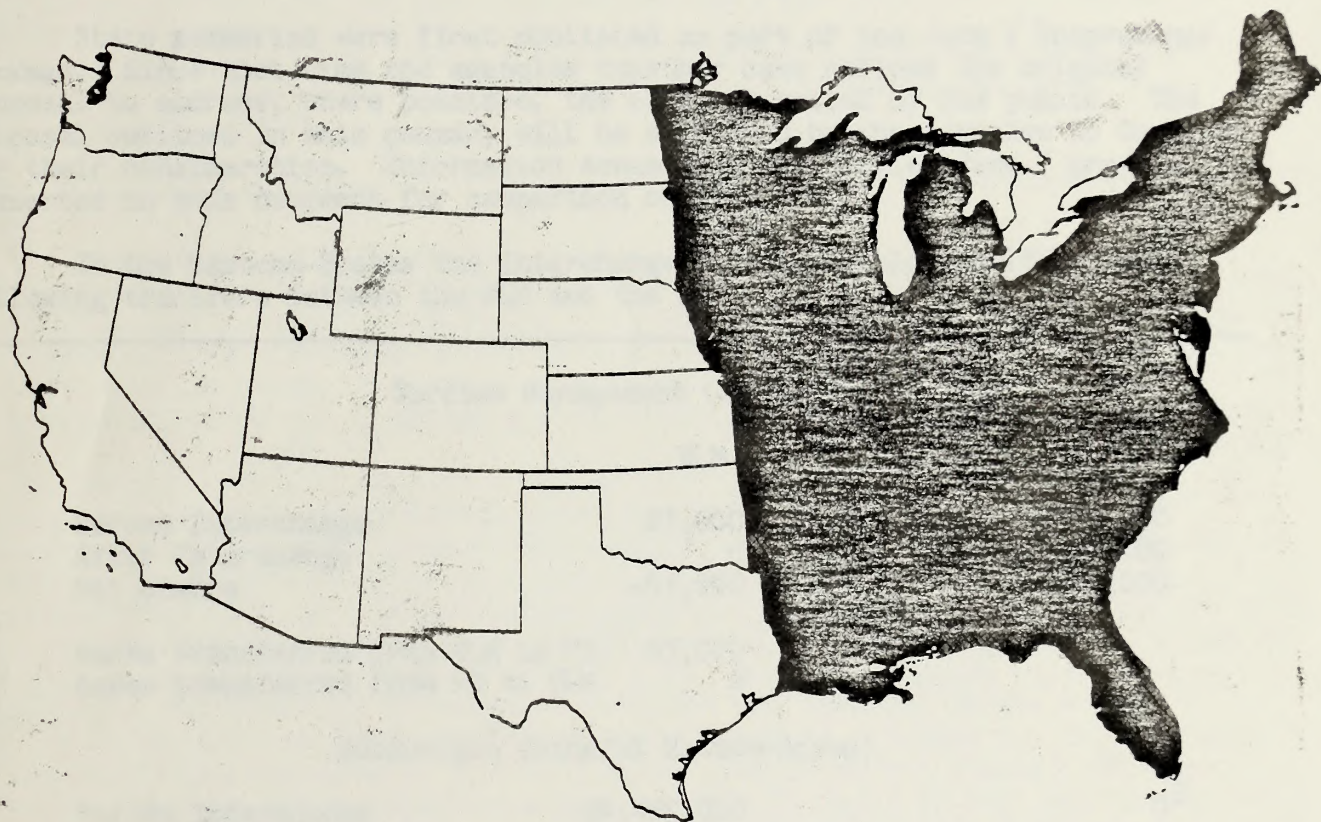




BLM/FS INTERCHANGE

Summary

EASTERN STATES



Eastern Region
Southern Region
FOREST SERVICE

PREPARED BY:

Eastern States Office
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT



FEBRUARY 1986



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1. The first of these is the fact that the Government has not yet decided whether it will accept the offer of the United States to purchase the rights in the atomic energy patents. This decision is of great importance, for it will determine whether the Government will be able to control the development and use of atomic energy.

1. The first part of the report is a general introduction to the subject of the study. It discusses the importance of the study and the objectives of the research.

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INTERCHANGE IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY EASTERN STATES

I. OVERVIEW

The following summarizes the proposed Interchange for the 31 Eastern States: Minnesota south to Louisiana and east to the Atlantic. This summary includes a review of the public involvement, the proposed action, the anticipated costs and savings, and the actions identified during the study that can be taken independently of the Interchange. More detailed information is available for review in the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Eastern States Office in Alexandria, VA, or the Forest Service (FS) Regional Offices in Atlanta, GA, and Milwaukee, WI.

State summaries were first published as part of the June 7 Interchange package. Since that time the agencies together have refined the original proposal to address, where possible, the concerns raised by the public. The proposal outlined in this summary will be submitted by the agencies to Congress for their consideration. Information concerning the earlier June 7 proposal is presented in this document for comparison only.

In the Eastern States the Interchange proposal would result in the following transfers between the BLM and the FS:

Surface Management (Acres)

	BLM	FS ¹
Before Interchange	61,000 ²	24,305,000
After Interchange	0	24,366,000
Net change	-61,000	+61,000
Acres transferred from BLM to FS	61,000	
Acres transferred from FS to BLM	0	

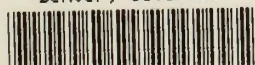
Subsurface (Mineral Estate-Acres)

		³
Before Interchange	34,465,000	
After Interchange	0	34,465,000

- 1 Includes acquired surface and subsurface acres in Texas (15 counties) and Oklahoma (2 counties).
- 2 Does not include islands, which number in the thousands. Islands would be transferred to FS jurisdiction.
- 3 FS has partial authority, including consent on leasing, on 14,105,000 acres; however, legislation is needed to provide full minerals leasing authority.

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In the 31 Eastern States and certain eastern counties in Texas and Oklahoma, the FS would assume all program and natural resource management responsibilities of the BLM except General Land Office (GLO) functions, Cadastral Surveying, and jurisdiction over Federal minerals under Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) administered lands.

The BLM would continue the functions of the original GLO, including maintenance of Public Domain lands records, Public Domain status and title examinations, and issuance of patents. Cadastral survey, including maintenance of plats and field notes for public use, also would remain BLM's responsibility. These records and services would continue to be available in the BLM Eastern States Office in Alexandria, VA.

All communities in the East that currently have a FS or a BLM office, or both, would continue to have an agency office after the Interchange.

II. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Public involvement has been an integral part of refining the original Interchange proposal. BLM and FS representatives conducted 10 meetings and numerous one-on-one contacts and briefings in the Eastern States. They issued news releases and sent over 1,800 letters. Special efforts were made to keep the Governors, Congressional delegations, State and Federal agencies, minerals industry representatives, and conservation groups informed as to the status of the proposal.

One hundred twenty-three responses to the Interchange proposal originated in the Eastern States during the formal public review, from June 7 to July 8. Nearly 90 percent were submitted on a form letter and were from the area including and immediately surrounding Alexandria, VA, the city from which the BLM minerals program for the Eastern States is currently administered.

The form letter included the following reasons for opposing the June 7 proposal: 1) it was simpler, cheaper, and more convenient to do business with the single BLM Eastern States Office, where filing of offers and lease issuance takes place, than the 23 local FS offices that were proposed to take over these functions, and 2) the FS lacked minerals expertise. The form letter questioned whether the savings could be realized.

Of the others responding, some supported and some opposed the June 7 proposal. Most supported the concepts of cost efficiency, better service, and bringing together under one agency surface and subsurface management responsibility.

In response to the question of centralizing versus dispersing the minerals program, the agencies made the following provisions.

* Filing of leases would initially remain at the BLM Alexandria location.

* When adequate transition mechanisms are in place to ensure continuity of service, the filing, minerals adjudication and lease issuance functions would shift to the FS Regional Offices in Milwaukee and Atlanta. These two offices, instead of the originally proposed 23 separate offices, would each become the "Office of Record" for minerals leasing case files.

* An Automated Data Processing/Telecommunication system that will link Regional and Forest Supervisors' Offices would also be installed. Once operational, this would provide current status of all leases and pending applications for all locations in the Eastern States. The 23 designated Forest Supervisor's Offices would then function as remote filing locations, in addition to the main filing locations at the two Regional Offices. These changes would provide both local service and quick access to records.

III. PROPOSED ACTION

A. Communities Affected

In Alexandria, VA, the Eastern States BLM Office would remain staffed with approximately 48 BLM employees to perform the GLO and surveying functions. The BLM offices at Jackson, MS, Milwaukee, WI, and Rolla, MO, would be merged into the FS offices at those and other FS locations in the East.

B. Office and Staffing Changes

The BLM or the FS would have an office in all locations where either one or both had an office prior to the Interchange. The table below shows the proposed office changes plus staffing changes of three or more in agency communities. There are currently 6,756 FS, and 249 BLM positions in the East. After Interchange these numbers would change to 6,877 FS and 48 BLM, for a total decrease of 80 positions. Every effort would be made to absorb the extra employees into both organizations and otherwise make the changes through normal attrition.

Community	Existing Offices		<u>Proposed Changes</u>		<u>Net Staff Change</u>	
			June 7	Revised	June 7	Revised
Alexandria, VA	BLM	ESO	BLM FO	BLM FO	-113	-113
Atlanta, GA	FS	RO	NC	NC	+ 32	+ 32
Bedford, IN	FS	SO	NC	NC	+ 3	+ 3
Cadillac, MI	FS	SO	NC	NC	+ 3	+ 3
	FS	RD	NC	NC		
Cass Lake, MN	FS	SO	NC	NC	+ 4	+ 4
	FS	RD	NC	NC		
Hot Springs, AR	FS	SO	NC	NC	+ 12	+ 12
Jackson, MS	FS	SO	FS SO	FS SO	- 32	- 32
	BLM	DO				
Milwaukee, WI	FS	RO	FS RO	FS RO	- 17	- 17
	BLM	DO				
Montgomery, AL	FS	SO	NC	NC	+ 5	+ 5
Pineville, LA	FS	SO	NC	NC	+ 9	+ 9
Rolla, MO	FS	SO	FS SO	FS SO	NC	NC
	BLM	FO				
Tallahassee, FL	FS	SO	NC	NC	+ 3	+ 3
Winchester, KY	FS	SO	NC	NC	+ 3	+ 3

Changes of less than three positions each in Cleveland, TN, Roanoke, VA, Park Falls, WI, Rutland, VT, Elkins, WV, Harrisburg, IL, and Duluth, MN.

Net Change: - 80 - 80

Note: BLM ESO = Eastern States Office, DO = District Office, FO = Field Office, FS SO = Supervisor's Office, RO = Regional Office, NC = No change

C. Lands and Minerals

GLO functions, patent records, and lands adjudication work related to title issues would remain in Alexandria under the BLM.

Mineral lease applications would initially continue to be filed in the Eastern States BLM Office in Alexandria, VA. As soon as the two FS Regional Offices in Milwaukee, WI, and Atlanta, GA, have established capabilities to process lease applications and adjudications, they would take over the responsibilities as the new Offices of Record and the filing locations. BLM adjudicators and other minerals experts at Alexandria would be offered reassignment to the Regional Offices to assist in building FS expertise quickly.

An automated data processing/telecommunications system would be established to link FS Regional and Supervisor's Offices. Once this linkage is operational, FS offices would be able to provide quick local access to records. Designated Forest Supervisor's Offices would become remote filing locations, in addition to the main Offices of Record in the two Regional

Offices. Adjudications would continue to be done at the two Regional Offices.

Known geologic structure determinations, communitization, and unitization work would be done at the Regional Offices except in the following States, which have a sufficient workload to warrant staffing the necessary expertise at the Forest Supervisor's Offices: Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas.

Minerals inspection and enforcement responsibilities would be at the Forest Supervisor's level, with some inspection personnel located on those Ranger Districts that would have heavy workloads.

D. Public Service

As a result of the Interchange, minerals service would improve. Processing time would shorten for actions such as adjudications and lease issuance. Lease status information would be available in 23 designated remote filing centers and in Regional Offices in Milwaukee, WI, and Atlanta, GA. Information would be more readily available to a larger share of the public. Placing Federal records near State and local records would make it easier for the public to obtain information in areas of intermingled stewardship.

GLO records relating to the 13 public land states in the east would continue to be available to the public in Alexandria, Virginia.

The shifting of services and records would be phased in over a period of time and would not occur until trained personnel are in place to provide uninterrupted service to users. Several steps would be taken to ensure adequate expertise. Current BLM professional employees, such as geologists, petroleum engineers, etc. would be offered reassignment in the Regional Offices in Atlanta and Milwaukee.

The FS computerized communication and distributed processing capability would help ensure consistent, accurate, and timely information at all public contact points and designated filing centers.

Consolidating and merging the two BLM District Offices and a large part of the Alexandria, VA, office with the FS offices would lower fixed costs. The combination of the BLM and the FS staff would also lower fixed costs, reduce interagency coordination requirements, and reduce duplication of records.

The FS and BLM are required to coordinate their actions with Federal, State, and local agencies, as well as private individuals. The Interchange would simplify coordination by eliminating dual agency contact. For example, long-range planning requirements and environmental issues now result in both agencies obtaining input from the same people on similar issues. After the Interchange, one agency would handle public contact on Federal lands and minerals issues.

IV. ANTICIPATED COSTS AND SAVINGS

A. Implementation Costs

Personnel costs	\$1,696,000
Space costs	0
Other costs	1,322,000
Total	\$3,018,000

B. Savings During First 5 Years

Personnel savings	\$10,006,000
Space savings	914,000
Other savings	113,000
Total Savings	\$11,033,000

C. Average Annual Savings After Implementation \$2,910,000.
(Most would result from reduced personnel costs.)

D. Other Operational Efficiencies

The FS broad geographical presence in most of the Eastern States would reduce the travel costs associated with managing existing BLM lands.

Fewer automated systems would be used to manage information on Federal lands and minerals in the East.

Federal/State coordination would be enhanced and simplified when dealing with lands and minerals issues, policies, and procedures.

One agency would inspect minerals operations.

V. ACTIONS THAT SHOULD BE TAKEN INDEPENDENTLY OF INTERCHANGE

Through the joint planning process, the agencies have identified a number of actions that would improve the operating efficiencies of both the BLM and the FS, improve service to users, and reduce costs and duplication of effort. The following actions should be implemented independently of the Interchange.

Train selected FS employees to inspect minerals operations and report any violations to the BLM.

Execute a cooperative agreement permitting trained FS employees to assist in the inspection of BLM minerals operations on National Forest lands.

Initiate on-the-job training of FS land law examiners by BLM personnel.

Familiarize Forest and Regional Office staff with BLM minerals leasing procedures and policies.

Acquaint Region and Forest staff with the Wild Horse and Burro adoption process so they can assist with the program.

Share scarce skills (e.g., FS resource specialists; BLM geologists).

Colocate the BLM Rolla minerals staff with the Mark Twain National Forest Supervisor's Office in Rolla.

Execute a new Memorandum of Understanding increasing FS management of surface impacts of mineral operations.

Assure that State case files on the BLM Automated Lands and Minerals Record System are accessible on the FS distributed processing system.

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